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274th MP Co. Returns Home

By Spc. Robert Albrecht
DCNG Public Affairs

The only event more emotionally charged than a deployment of a National Guard unit is the return of soldiers from a long tour of duty. The 274th Military Police Company was honored for their heroic service and welcomed home from their tour of duty on May 28th, 2004 at the DC armory.

The unit had been deployed over a year ago in connection with Operation Enduring Freedom. The soldiers were welcomed with open arms and verbal salutes from all of the DC military community as well as their friends & family. Brig. Gen.

Errol Schwartz the commander of the District of Columbia's Army National Guard gave the opening



SSG Ronald F. Wilson is greeted by his father at the 274 MP Co. welcome home ceremony.

remarks at the freedom salute ceremony honoring these soldiers

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Capital Guardian Staff

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Training for the Worse

**By Capt. Sheldon Smith and
Spc. Khalia Jackson**
DCNG Public Affairs

Sometime during a summer night in the year 2005, a box is left outside the CNN Washington Bureau in downtown DC. Upon arriving to work, a news intern finds it and reports it to security.

After examining the package, the building's security suspect that it may be a bomb. The DC Fire Department and Metropolitan

Police arrive on the scene and determine that the box might contain a dangerous substance. After establishing a command post, the incident commander makes a call.

Later a column of specialized blue and white trucks, vans and SUVs are seen approaching the scene with sirens and flashing lights. Upon arrival, the special team clad in dark blue fatigues begins to unload it's trucks and trailers, set

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Women's Federal Program emphasizes their important roles in the DC National Guard

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Lorenzo Parnell
DCNG Public Affairs

DC National Guard held a celebration of Federal Employed Women Program Mar. 30, 2004 in the Commanding General's Conference room. Maj. Gen. David F. Wherey, Commanding General, D.C. National Guard, Brig. Gen. Schwartz, Commander, D.C. Army National Guard attended the program to support Federal Women's Program.

The invocation to begin the ceremony was given by Maj. Andrea Foster (Deputy State Chaplin) followed by a warm welcome to every one by Brig. Gen. Schwartz. Victoria Roddin performed an Expressive Movement dance that inspired the audience. To keep the inspirational vibe going we heard the incredible voice of Sgt. Dawn Peterson (Human Resources office) sang "Just Stand."

The guest speaker Phyllis Brantley serves as the National Program Manager for all Special Emphasis Programs in the National Guard.

"I have a 15 page draft I have with me to speak about the program. But, after all that I just heard I think I will just speak from the heart," said Brantley. "I am proud to say that our leadership in the DC National Guard is on the right track in support of women being qualified applicants for positions of leadership," she said.

Brantley spoke about her own personal experience from her career in the United States Marine Corps and how it reflected on her life as not only a Marine but also, very much an American.



Phyllis Brantley gives remarks about the importance of women in the workplace.

"As the Special Emphasis Program Manager we woman want to give the General qualified applicants to choose from. In the State Equal Employment Office you always hear about quotas. Quotas means to me, see me as qualified applicant, not female not black," said Brantley. She gave words of encouragement for all women during her speech. Brantley referred to how some women should be looked at for what they can do, not by gender.

Additionally, she spoke about her male counter parts that perform the same jobs but receive higher pay. If the males don't receive higher pay in regards to salaries they often see larger bonuses saying "the bonuses for males are statistically higher than females." According to Brantley, "Silly Women" are those who try to get somewhere by smiling and showing some leg, and they make it difficult for the woman who want to level themselves to a level of equal footing.

The ceremony concluded with an encore performance from Roddin. Then Marvin Carmon (Facilities Manager) graced the audience with a solo. He sang the "Negro National Anthem." When all had concluded, The Commanding General Maj. Gen. Wherey gave a presentation to the guest speaker and performers that helped to celebrate the Federally Employed Women's Program. "I'm still going through trails," said Brantley. ♦

I'm proud to say that our leadership in the DC National Guard is on the right track...

Phyllis Brantley

The last of the C-22s flies off into the Sunset, marking the end of an Era

By Capt. Sharon Kibiloski

Chief, Media Division, Andrews AFB

The 201st Airlift Squadron knows about aircraft conversions. This unique squadron is part of the District of Columbia Air National Guard and has seen over 25 aircraft conversions in 57 years, claiming the Air Force record. This particular conversion is different, as it marks the end of an era in Distinguished Visitor (DV) transportation.

The C-22B (727-100) was first rolled out at the 201st Airlift Squadron (formerly Detachment 1) in April 1986. They were procured from Pan Am Airlines and were to replace the T-43 (twin engine 737-200), originally designed for navigator training, but converted for “mission-support”. Pan Am had a history of giving signifying names to their individual aircraft. After their purchase, the 201st researched the tail numbers associated with the names and reassigned the aircraft their former names. ‘The Ringleader’ (tail #4615), ‘The Young Mechanic’ (tail #4616), the ‘Pacific Raider’ (tail #4612) and ‘Pathfinder’ (tail #4610) were just a few names affectionately given to the C-22. In keeping with tradition, the names were again painted on the outside of the fuselage.

The C-22 wasn’t a ‘new’ aircraft when it arrived at Det 1; it was introduced into the airline industry in 1963, and was at that time a more practical aircraft for their mission. By 1986, Det 1 was completely operational; had purchased four C-22 recognized and serviced around the world. The required standard crew included two pilots, a flight engineer and three to four in-flight passenger service specialists.



One of the last C-22's prepares for take off on the air field at Andrews AFB.

“The main benefit of converting to the C-22 was safety,” said retired Senior Master Sgt. Randy Thomas who flew on both the T-43 and C-22. “It was George Cibulas; flight engineer Senior Master Sgt. Rick Sepanski; and flight attendants Senior Master Sgt. LeJuane Robinson, Master Sgt. Vondella Stevens-Maynard and Tech. Sgt. Jennifer Walker that really had hands on interactions with the conversion.”

“The airspace was eerily quite and everyone was in a sober mood. Whenever we flew over a major metropolis, like Chicago O’Hare, International Airport we were intercepted and escorted by F-16’s,” said Senior Master Sgt. Rick Sepanski. “Looking down, the ramps, taxiways and some of the runways were packed with parked aircraft, something we hope never to see again”, he said.

The C-22s were sold individually, but the last one to go was aircraft tail #4615, just two weeks after its sister, tail #4616 departed on Feb. 26, 2004. It was bought by Dodson International and will be based in South Africa as an airliner. The airframe time on these aircraft

were at the 60,000 hour mark and if we know these reliable aircraft, they still have plenty of life left. ♦



One of the last C-22's prepares for take off on the air field at Andrews AFB.

Jamaica Defense Force visits DCNG officials

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Lorenzo Parnell

DCNG Public Affairs

The opportunity for the State Partnership Program between District of Columbia National Guard (DCNG) and Jamaica Defense Force (JDF) as progressed exponentially. The senior leadership annual meeting consisted of several briefing and tours with subject matter experts.

Rear Adm. Hardley Lewin, Chief of Staff JDF accompanied by, Lt. Col. Lenton Gordon - Commander National Reserve, Capt. O'Neal Blair - Training Officer - Warrant Officer Patrick Morris - Force Sgt. Maj. Major arrived for the annual meeting on June 14, 2004. They were greeted by DCARNG commander Brig. Gen. Errol Schwartz and State Partnership Program Coordinator, Col. Camilla White and staff.

Led by Col. White the guests were escorted to meet and greet at the Jamaican Embassy where they discussed the program intent and future program endeavours.

"The State Partnership Program got off to a slow start a few years ago. Since then it has intensified and is making great stride in the right direction," said Rear Adm. Lewin. "We are pleased with the progress we are making," he said.

During the 5-day visit the group met with key personnel including Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum, Chief National Guard Bureau, Rear Adm. Jan Gaudio,



Members of the Jamaica Defense Force pose for a photo on the steps of the Pentagon after completing a tour with Col. Mark Kalber, division chief of international affairs.

Commandant of Naval District Washington, and Courtney Rattrey acting Ambassador of Jamaica. The goals of meeting with the DCNG infrastructure were to gain insight and useful knowledge on the history and future plans of the DCNG. The areas of interest included Headquarters, National Guard Bureau; the Pentagon; Naval Yard, Washington, D.C.; and Aviation Career Day, Andrews AFB, Md.

The State Partnership Program links US states with partner countries for the purpose of supporting the security cooperation objective of the Combatant Commander. The programs goals reflect an evolving international affairs mission for the National Guard using the unique civil-military nature of the Guard to interact with both active and reserve forces of foreign countries.

The State Partnership Program actively participates in a host of engagement activities ranging from bilateral familiarization and training events to exercise, fellowship-style internships, and civic leader visits. All activities are coordinated through the Theater Combatant Commander and the US Ambassador's country teams, and other agencies as appropriate, to ensure that the National Guard support is tailored to meet both US and the state partnership countries objectives.

There are currently 44 states that participate in State Partnership Programs.



Rear Adm. Hardley Lewin, Chief, Jamaican Defense Force speaks to LTG H. Steven Blum, chief, National Guard Bureau concerning the State Partnership.

547th returns home

By Spc. Lorie Jewell

Army News Service

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, April 28, 2004) – Mixed emotions ebbed and flowed through a ‘Freedom Salute’ ceremony commemorating the return of the D.C. National Guard’s 547th Transportation Company from a yearlong tour in Iraq.

Plenty of welcome home posters, yellow ribbons, and American flags decorated the armory, where more than 100 family members, friends, military and government officials gathered April 27 to honor the unit and other members of the Guard who have been called to service since Sept. 11, 2001. Hugs and handshakes abounded.

But the joy and relief of being back on home turf was tempered with the absence of Spc. Darryl Dent, 21, who died Aug. 26 when an improvised explosive device hit the 5-ton truck he was in not far from Baghdad. Dent was part of a convoy was providing security for a mail run.

Brig. Gen. Errol Schwartz, deputy commanding general of the D.C. Guard, congratulated the roughly 150 Soldiers for doing a fine job in Iraq, thanked family members for the great job they did in holding things together on the home front, and asked for a moment of silence for Dent. The crowd then gave Dent’s father, Vernon, a standing ovation.

While in Iraq, unit members were involved in more than 1,200 combat missions and put more than



The families and friends of the 547th welcome the soldiers home.

564,000 miles on unit vehicles; conducted more than 100 raids with the 82nd Airborne Division, rounding up about 600 Saddam Hussein

loyalists; relocated the 28th Combat Support Hospital from a forward logistics base to downtown Iraq. The unit also escorted more than 1.4 billion pounds of mail throughout Iraq.

In addition to Schwartz, Soldiers were congratulated, thanked, and welcomed home by their commanding general, Maj. Gen. David Wherley Jr., Washington, D.C. Mayor Anthony Williams and Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton.



After a long flight soldiers arrive home with a smile.

As part of the ‘Freedom Salute’

campaign, which recognizes National Guard Soldiers who have been called to duty, each Soldier was presented with an American flag in a wood display case, a Defender of Freedom certificate, and commemorative coins and medallions. A concert by the 257th Army Band and country singer Keith Bryant followed the ceremony.

Spc. James Pelzer appreciated the recognition, especially having the flag to take home.

“I was going to go buy one like this,” said Pelzer, with his wife, Melba, close by. “Now I don’t have to. It’s going on top of the television set in our living room, so I can look at it every day.”

While Spc. Dwayne Frost was picking up his memorabilia, his teenage son, Dwayne Jr., held tight to a handmade “Welcome Home” and chatted with cousins Rosslyn and Rhonda Frost. Having his dad home is an overdue relief, Frost Jr. said. “It feels like he’s been gone for a long time,” he sighed.

In the two weeks since the unit returned, the Frosts have learned to breathe easy again. “Hakuna Matata!” quipped Rosslyn Frost, quoting a song verse from “The Lion King.” No worries. Not now. ♦

Training for the Worst

communications and coordinate with the incident commander.

In this fictitious scenario, the men and women in blue fatigues belong to neither the Secret Service, fire department or Marine Corps – they are a National Guard Civil Support Team. The District of Columbia will soon have such a unit that will help local authorities respond to incidents that potentially involve nuclear, radiological, biological or chemical agents.

With the aid of the Virginia National Guard's 34th Civil Support Team, a similar team will be up and running in the District as soon as next year.

The Virginia CST is fully certified and has been supporting the state of Virginia since the year 2000. With their aid, DC's 33rd CST will also achieve certification and become a vital part of

the National Capital Region's anti-terrorism arsenal.

During training at the Virginia Military Reservation, DC Guardsmen were given hands-on instruction on the planning and execution of WMD missions.

Beginning with the alert phase, CST members received and analyzed missions, rehearsed their plans, and deployed to a site at which they conducted surveys and decontamination exercises.

Using several detection and monitoring

instruments, CSTs can rapidly and confidently provide the incident commander on-scene analysis of chemical or radiological hazards and presumptive identification of biological agents. The pride and joy of the 34th CST is their Analytical Laboratory Suite (ALS).

"This vehicle receives all samples collected by the Virginia team," said 2nd Lt. Kelvin Hart, nuclear medical science officer, DC National Guard. "In the ALS, they test to determine the agent, and what measures can be taken to eliminate or neutralize it."

Staff Sgt. Rhonda Johnson of the 34th CST gave 33rd CST soldiers instruction on sample collection



Spec. Athena Knight (left), Sgt. Nicole Mahon (center) of the District of Columbia's 33rd CST, assist a member from Virginia's 34th CST in deploying a communications satellite during annual training at the Virginia Military Reservation in Virginia Beach, Virginia.



Staff Sgt. Ernesto Rodriquez (center) of the District of Columbia's 33rd CST, observes members of Virginia's 34th CST demonstrate EVAC procedures for man-down during

Continued from cover

techniques. Once collected by the CST, samples are both analyzed by the ALS and sent to labs elsewhere for confirmation.

Johnson's instruction included the collection of liquids, solids, soil, vegetation and wipes of various surfaces. "We're training and mentoring the 33rd," she said. When they go heavy, they won't have to go in blind." Once CST's are certified, they are referred to as a heavy unit because they have the equipment and full-time staffing needed to be fully mission capable.

The 34th CST had several other vehicles of interest, including a Unified Command Suite or UCS. This high-tech van can provide the local authorities with communications among local jurisdictions and with the President during a catastrophic event.

"This truck can help first responders from multiple agencies and jurisdictions talk directly to one-another," said Lt. Col. Gregory Castello, commander of the DCNG team.

To the National Capital Region first responders, the UCS would prove especially useful. Equipped with a satellite dish, this apparatus supports up to 28 IP addresses and enables high-speed voice and data communications over secure and unsecured networks.

Another point of instruction was the work done by the CST's reconnaissance team. Using three types of detection devices, the team surveyed a building and a campsite looking for nerve or blister agents, gasses lower explosive levels and volatile organic materials, and radiation.

Likely the most important instruction of the day, decontamination training, was both detailed and lengthy. The emphasis was on procedure personnel decontamination. The training was held in a fully established personnel DECON site using some of the latest military and commercial tactical DECON gear.

"If you've been listening to the news, given the current situation, the 33rd could fall in on us at any



A member of Virginia's 34th CST displays the 'Level A' full chemical suit during mock-up training for the District of Columbia's 33rd CST during annual training at the Virginia Military Reservation in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

time in the near future," said Lt. Col. Colleen Chipper, commander of the 34th CST.

33rd CST could be called upon by the National Guard to augment the Virginia unit. Such a possibility makes combined unit training even more valuable.

CSTs were designed by Congress as National Guard units to augment local, state and regional terrorism response capabilities in events suspected to involve weapons of mass destruction. WMDs are dangerous agents used as part of a hostile act.

On call 24 hours a day, seven days a week, CSTs can be on the scene within three hours to support civil authorities.

CSTs are the military's first responders. ♦

274th MP unit returns home safe

Continued from cover

returning from their service in Afghanistan.

The mood was uplifting and smiles were abundant as soldiers were reunited with their friends and families.

The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton, Congresswoman, District of Columbia, was present and gave glowing remarks. "You were in our hearts, minds and prayers. We thank you and God for returning you safe and sound to us," she said as she spoke to the crowd of civil servants and those who supported them.

Several of the speakers at the ceremony touched on the outstanding service and safety record while the unit had been deployed.

Every soldier that left one year ago returned to the District just days before the welcome home

ceremony was held, a feat that is not easily accomplished in such a dangerous tour of duty.

The units' return attracted much attention from the news and media. NBC 4, BET, WTOP and the PG Gazette all had representatives at the ceremony and interviewed many of the returning soldiers.

Soldiers received a special American Flag in a wood display case, a commemorative coin presented only to National Guard members and a "Defender of Freedom" certificate signed by the both the Director and Command Sergeant Major of the National Guard.

The ceremony concluded with closing remarks made by Maj. Gen. David F. Wherley Jr., Commanding General of the District of Columbia National Guard, and the traditional reciting of the benediction by Maj. Stuart Kenworth, Chaplain, 372nd Military Police Battalion. ♦

Army updated uniform for the 21st Century

By Sgt. 1st Class Marcia Triggs

Army News Service

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, June 14, 2004) - The Army will be fielding a new combat uniform designed by NCOs and tested by Brigade Soldiers in Iraq since October. On the Army's 229th birthday, senior leadership introduced the Army Combat Uniform during a Pentagon cake-cutting ceremony. Soldiers were on display, suited up in the wrinkle-free uniform with a digitized camouflage pattern.

Three different version of the ACU have been developed, and more than 10,000 uniforms have been produced and dragged through the sand in Iraq and at Army training centers. Even more are on American production lines to be issued by April 2005 to soldiers in deploying units. Fielding to the total Army should be complete by December 2007, said officials from the Program Executive Office, known as PEO Soldier. ♦



Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Myhre, the Program Executive Office NCOIC, sports the Army Combat Uniform for the press.

Lights Focus On Dupont Circle

By Del Quentin Wilber

Washington Post Staff Writer

The D.C. National Guard is stationing high-powered lights in the Dupont Circle area this week to brighten dark streets that might have contributed to a rash of robberies and the slaying of a popular waiter at a neighborhood restaurant, officials said yesterday.

The lights were originally scheduled to be deployed at 14th and Chapin Streets NW on Tuesday night to fight drug dealing. But D.C. Police Cmdr. Larry McCoy asked that the lights be moved to help police deter street robberies.

One set was placed at 18th and R Streets NW, where waiter Adrien D. Alstad, 55, was killed during an apparent holdup attempt early Monday. The other set of lights was sent to 14th and R Streets NW, a corner in the Logan Circle area known for drug dealing.

Some of the floodlights — part of a D.C. National Guard anti-crime program — are scheduled to be in the Dupont area until Saturday, according to Staff Sgt. Lorenzo Parnell of the D.C. Air National Guard.

For years, the National Guard has deployed the lights throughout the city, mostly in areas known for heavy drug dealing.

In addition to the lighting, police beefed up patrols in the area. No arrests have been made in Alstad's death, but police said it might be connected to a recent spate of holdups in the neighborhood. Witnesses told police that, moments before Alstad was fatally shot, they heard him say, "I don't have any money."

Detectives are investigating whether Alstad's slaying is connected to an attempted robbery early Tuesday that resulted in a high-speed chase into Southeast Washington. The driver of that car escaped, but police arrested a passenger.

Even as officers flooded the neighborhood, two men were robbed at gunpoint by three assailants early yesterday in the 1600 block of 16th Street NW, police said.

The robbers pistol-whipped one victim and stole the other's wallet before running away, police said. Police and civic leaders said most of the recent robberies have occurred early in the morning, after bars and restaurants let out.

Robbers appear to be targeting people walking on dimly lit streets. Robert P. Halligan, chairman of the public safety committee for the advisory neighborhood commission that includes Dupont, said he was upset that the District had not done enough to fix lights that have not been functioning for months on R Street NW.

"I feel horrified that [the city] can't do its job and the National Guard is doing it," Halligan said.

Last night, crews were replacing broken lights at 18th and R Streets. Mayor Anthony A. Williams ate lunch yesterday at Annie's Paramount Steak House, where Alstad worked as a waiter. Williams said he visited the restaurant because "when there's a crime in our city, it's of a concern to all of us."

Staff Writer Lori Montgomery contributed to this report.



The D.C. National Guard lights go up along R Street NW as part of an effort to cut down on crime. The lights usually are used in areas where drug-dealing is a problem. (Robert A. Reeder — The Washington Post)

New Push for more College Funding

By Staff Sgt. Lorenzo Parnell

DCNG Public Affairs

Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC) announced that she has cosponsored the District of Columbia National Guard College Access Act on March 25, 2004. The D.C. College Access Act of 1999 was discussed at the hearing and the bill if passed will provide up to \$2,500 in tuition assistance per year for members of the D.C. Army and Air National Guard.

There were concerns that this bill would only cover residence of Washington, D.C. but all members of the D.C. National Guard Army and Air are eligible for the tuition assistance. Norton said that she and Rep. Dave Hobson (R-OH) a member of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, introduced the bill to help D.C. members of the Guard who are serving in Iraq and leaving their families with heavy financial burden resulting from their absence from home.

Norton said, "Many States including Maryland and Virginia, already are proving college financial aid to members of the military. These additional federal funds will make it even easier for them to meet escalating college expenses. I believe working with Dave Hobson, I will be able to get the additional higher education benefits for these residents."

The D.C. National Guard College Access program is similar to

Congresswoman Norton's D.C. Access Act, which has sent more than 6,000 D.C. students to U.S. public colleges at low in-state rates and provided tuition assistance to private colleges in the region and nationwide since it was



passed in 1999. At a hearing the Government Reform Committee today, Norton said that the success of this act and its program, the D.C. Tuition Assistance Grant (TAG) program, particularly its benefits to residence and to the District's economy, argue strongly for the reauthorization of the College Access Act. She said its success and benefits also justify "every effort to ensure that TAG keeps abreast of inflation and of the demand of education by parents and students."



Congresswoman Eleanor Norton gives a speech intended to raise awareness and support for her push for DC college aid funding.

The popular program gives D.C. students the opportunity to attend any U.S. public college at low in-state tuition rates and provides \$2,500 annual grants to students who attend private colleges and colleges in the region. This also includes nationwide Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU). Norton said that since D.C. Tag's implementation, close monitoring by the GAO has verified success. However, its success, demand and popularity threaten its continued viability. There is a projected shortfall of \$10.2 million in the next fiscal year and up to a \$34 million shortfall FY'08.

"The D.C. College Access Act has helped to create greater equality with the states for higher education for our residents," Norton said. "D.C. National Guard College Access Act will bring about similar equality with the states from the military. These hard-pressed residents have been precipitously torn from their families and jobs to serve without a vote. At the very least, they deserve the opportunity available to other members of the armed forces at a time when they face financial hardship arising from war." ♦

D.C. United hosts Military Appreciation Day

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Lorenzo Parnell

DCNG Public Affairs

On June 19, 2004 the D.C. United Soccer team hosted Military Appreciation Day in honor all armed forces members who has served their country in support of Operation Noble Eagle and Iraqi freedom. This was an opportunity for military members and their families to see professional league soccer at it best. The event held at RFK Stadium turned to its challenger the Columbus Crew and set the stage for a great evening of events.

The pre-game ceremony featured an inter-service color guard, the singing of the national anthem, and the roll out of a giant size American flag by military service members. Additionally, Air Force F-16's conducted a fly-by over the stadium followed by an Army National Guard helicopter which circled over the stadium. Army Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Briscoe a spectator at the game said, "There's definitely no place like America."

"We have freedoms here that I think a lot of Americans take for granted, and I think the soldiers that are coming back from Iraq realize that those

freedoms are definitely worth fighting for," Briscoe said."

The D.C. United soccer team, which hosted the fifth annual Armed Forces Appreciation Day in support of those who defend America's freedoms. Communities across the nation have joined Operation Tribute to Freedom since Memorial Day 2003 as a way to show their appreciation for the troops. The D.C. National Guard with several other military-related groups took part in the event.

Brig. Gen. Errol R. Schwartz, Commander, Army National Guard, said that it is important for the American public to show support for the military.

"When you have men and women in harms way, away from their families – and in the case of the Guard and Reserve – away from their jobs, events like this show the families and the service members that they are really appreciated for what they do," said Schwartz. "So today is a real big thing for us in the military."

On hand also in support of the event was R. Louie Spinelli, the National Commander, Military Order of the Purple Heart Foundation. Spinelli came to present three D.C. National Guard soldiers of the 547th Transportation Company with a lifetime membership to the organization. The recipients were Sgt. Timothy Abele, Sgt. Antionette Scott and Cpl. Dwayne Frost whom all were awarded the Purple Heart. These soldiers also received an official Major League Soccer ball donated by the D.C. United Soccer Team.

As the D.C. United prepared to take the field, Brig. Gen. Schwartz rolled out the first soccer ball to the field as the Purple Heart recipients kicked the ball into play. The game turned out to be a crowd pleaser for the military members, families, and organization that supported the event. The D.C. United defeated the Columbus Crew with a 3-1 victory.



Staff Sgt. Thomas Richards, 121st Weather Flight, holds the corner piece of the U.S. flag during opening ceremonies.

Commander's Column



For the past two years, it seems as though the DC National Guard has been busier than ever supporting both our National and District of Columbia missions.

Although I'm pleased that a significant number of our deployed forces have returned safely from their deployments, my heart goes out to the family and close friends of Spc. Darryl T. Dent, who gave his life in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Since Sep. 11, units from the DC Army and Air National Guard have served at military bases and facilities in Colorado, the District of Columbia, Kansas, Maryland, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Texas and Virginia. They've also served honorably in Afghanistan, Cuba, Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar and several other locations.

Since the year 2000, Capital Guardians have been called upon to help our nations cope with everything from the uncertainty of the millenium change to major weather events to civil disturbances. America was attacked and we responded.

But, time waits for no one, and change is eminent. The nature of combat evolves as do the multitude of threats to our homeland and freedom in general. As guardians of freedom, we must be able to transform to meet the challenges of the 21st Century. We must be available to deploy at a moment's notice to defend the nation at home or abroad.

Transformation means applying current and future resources against requirements. It means examining our force structure in the context of current and future threats. We must recognize that the nature of war has shifted from linear to asymmetric.

But, most importantly, we must begin to think and prepare to operate jointly.

The DC National Guard like other military components is in a state of transformation. Because the days of large scale, single service operations are

long gone. National response since Sep. 11 has been joint, combined, intergovernmental, and in many cases, international.

Since October 2003, the Chief of the National Guard Bureau has spearheaded an effort to transform the National Guard into a more joint and effective organization from top to bottom. One desired goal of this effort has been to better meet the needs of our local and Federal leadership.

The Department of Defense is pursuing transformation as a means to keep the peace and defend freedom in the 21st century. With that in mind, our defense strategy and force structure must be focused on achieving six transformational goals:

- To protect the U.S. homeland and critical bases of operations.
- To project and sustain power in distant theaters.
- To deny our enemies sanctuary.
- To leverage information technology.
- To improve and protect information operations.
- To enhance space operations.

To accomplish these goals, the military must continue to evolve into an organization capable of operating jointly. As your commander, I commend you for the hard work and unyielding support you have given my staff and me and want you to know how much I appreciate your efforts.

Domestic and global challenges require a special kind of soldier that can be highly flexible and capable of adapting to changes in technology, as it will be applied to future combat. I have no doubt that the Capital Guardians are more than capable of exceeding the demands what will no doubt be placed upon you.

I urge you to maintain a high state of readiness in all areas, including training, physical fitness, technical competence and family preparedness.